

**JANUARY 4, 2022  
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING**

The Waterloo Region District School Board held a Special Board Meeting this evening at 7:00 p.m. via video conference, with the following members in attendance: S. Piatkowski (Chairperson), J. Herring, K. Meissner, C. Millar, M. Ramsay, K. Smith, L. Tremble, C. Watson, J. Weston, C. Whetham and K. Woodcock.

Student Trustees K. Soror and N. Vishkin were in attendance.

The following senior administration members were in attendance: j. chanicka (Director of Education and Secretary), D. Ahluwalia, J. Albrecht, R. DeBoer, E. Dougan-McKenzie, M. Gerard, E. Giannopoulos, C. Hill, P. Kaur, D. Lataille-Herdsman, B. Lemon, S. Miller, L. Read and G. Shantz.

Other staff in attendance: R. Lam and S. Reidel.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson S. Piatkowski called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

1. Moved by K. Woodcock, seconded by J. Herring:

**That the agenda of the January 4, 2022, Special Board Meeting be approved.**

-Carried-

**DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

**DELEGATIONS**

The following delegations presented at the meeting:

- Dorothy Wigmore - Respirators
- Kimiko Shibata - Respirators

**REPORTS**

**QUARANTINE AND ISOLATION MEDICAL FACILITY AT THE FORMER  
KINSMEN'S CHILDREN CENTRE ON CONCESSION DRIVE**

Coordinating Superintendent M. Gerard shared that the Region of Waterloo (Region) will be using the former Kinsmen's Children Centre on Concession Drive as a temporary medical facility to allow the homeless population to isolate and quarantine supported by Cambridge Shelter Corporation. He shared that the WRDSB has not been involved in the development of the

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plan but that staff toured the facility on Monday. He shared comments from Ann Tinker of the Cambridge Shelter Corporation regarding the shortage of space in the region and the need for an isolation site and further operational details of the site.

Coordinating Superintendent M. Gerard shared images of the medical facility in relation to its proximity to Coronation Public School and shared information on the safety measures in place.

He noted that both the Region of Waterloo and the Cambridge Shelter Corporation are open to working with the WRDSB and are coordinating an information session for the school council tomorrow evening.

Trustees asked questions regarding student safety, security at the medical facility and the upcoming meeting with the school council. Some trustees expressed dissatisfaction regarding the communications received from the Region.

Trustees discussed a motion moved to write a letter to the Region requesting a detailed safety plan.

2. Moved by C. Watson, seconded by C. Whetham:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board write a letter to the Region of Waterloo, regarding their plan to convert the Kinsmen Daycare Center into an isolation center for individuals experiencing homelessness who test positive for COVID-19, requesting that the Region provide a detailed safety plan and timelines for parents of the four surrounding schools and community members.**

-Carried-

Opposed:  
K. Meissner  
S. Piatkowski

## **COVID-19 AND RETURN TO THE CLASSROOM**

After an introduction by Director j. chanicka and Associate Director L. Read, trustees received updates on the following items: Superintendent J. Albretch provided information on the temporary remote learning options available for elementary and secondary students; updates were also provided on changes to health and safety measures; Coordinating Superintendent G. Shantz provided information on staff vaccination rates and coverage; Coordinating Superintendent M. Gerard shared a ventilation and transportation health and safety measures.

Trustees discussed a motion moved regarding N95 respirators including comments regarding student safety. Trustees received clarification from staff regarding the role of the Joint Health and Safety Committee and the necessary timelines to implement protocols should the motion be passed.

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Trustees discussed a motion to refer the main motion to staff.

3. Moved by M. Ramsay, seconded by K. Smith:

**That the motion be referred to staff to connect with the Joint Health and Safety Committee for discussion and to report back to the Board of Trustees at the January 17, 2022 Committee of the Whole meeting.**

-Motion to Refer Defeated-

Opposed:  
J. Herring  
K. Meissner  
C. Millar  
L. Tremble  
C. Watson  
J. Weston  
C. Whetham  
K. Woodcock  
\*K. Soror  
\*N. Vishkin

\* Student Trustees votes are recorded for the purpose of public record and for accountability to the student body; however, it is recognized that “a student trustee is not a member of the Board” (Education Act, Section 55 (2))

Trustees continued to discuss the main motion and receive clarification from staff regarding training and protocols for Personal Protective Equipment and risk mitigation. Trustee M. Ramsay requested a recorded vote.

4. Moved by J. Herring, seconded by L. Tremble:

**That effective January 5, 2022, all WRDSB staff who are slated to receive the N95 respirators from the Ministry of Education, be permitted to wear their own Health Canada approved respirator, if desired, from the approved list on the [Health Canada website](#) until the Ministry-supplied respirators are distributed; and**

**That WRDSB staff members who prefer to wear the current Ministry-supplied PPE until the N95 respirators arrive, be permitted to do so according to Ministry guidelines; and**

**That Trustees direct the Chairperson to inquire at the next chairs teleconference and to send a letter to the Minister of Education requesting that the same level of N95 respirators that are provided to staff, be provided for students.**

-Carried-

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In Favour:

J. Herring  
K. Meissner  
C. Millar  
S. Piatkowski  
L. Tremble  
C. Watson  
J. Weston  
C. Whetham  
K. Woodcock  
\* K. Soror  
\* N. Vishkin

Opposed:

M. Ramsay  
K. Smith

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5. Moved by K. Meissner, seconded by J. Herring:

**That the Board Meeting be extended an additional thirty minutes.**

-Carried-

Trustees continued to ask questions regarding the temporary remote learning for secondary students who struggle with remote learning, HEPA filters, student mental health and the impact of the closure of childcare centres. Trustees discussed the motion moved to request priority status to staff and students for vaccinations. A friendly amendment was accepted to add that copies of the letters be sent to other Ontario public school boards.

6. Moved by C. Millar, seconded by J. Herring:

**That the WRDSB write a letter to the CMOH (Chief Medical Officer of Health), including the local MOH (Medical Officer of Health) and the MOE (Minister of Education) requesting that priority status be provided to all school staff to receive COVID vaccine and subsequent boosters; and**

**That we request that priority status be given to all students aged 5+ for the first, second and third dose of COVID vaccine as medically appropriate; and**

**That copies be send to OPSBA and Ontario public school boards; and**

**That the Chairperson also makes this request at the next Chairs’ teleconference.**

-Carried-

Abstained: M. Ramsay

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Trustees continued to ask questions regarding communications to families, the timelines for returning to the classroom, quality of education, secondary semester two and student attendance. Staff confirmed that information on case management will be provided to trustees once clarification is received from the Ministry of Education.

**ADJOURNMENT**

7. Moved by C. Watson, seconded by J. Herring:

**That the Special Board Meeting of January 4, 2022, be adjourned.**

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 9:49 p.m.